

Clean Air News

VOLUME 8 ISSUE 2

FEBRUARY 2014 (FEB 1 - FEB 28)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Traffic Police Start Road Safety Class for License Seekers 3

Heavy Traffic Affects Road Upgradation Works 4

Air Pollution Exposure on Drivers being Studied 4

Metro Plan Dumped, Govt. Doles Rs 1,250 cr-BRTS Ahead 5

Good Reads 5

3rd Kathmandu Sustainable Urban Mobility Forum on NMVs



Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transport (MoPIT), Clean Energy Nepal (CEN) and Clean Air Network Nepal (CANN) in collaboration with FK-Norway, Clean Air Asia and UN-Habitat organized third 'Kathmandu Sustainable Urban Mobility Forum' on 21st February 2014.

The objective of the forum was to bring stakeholders together to initiate policy dialogues, enhance partnership and collaboration, and share initiatives and best practices on sustainable urban mobility and air quality management. This year, the forum was focused on non-motorized vehicles (NMVs), and sharing best practices from Asian cities on urban transportation and vehicular emission control.

Mr. Sunil Acharya, Program Director of Clean Energy Nepal welcomed the participants and highlighted objective of the forum. He stressed on the promotion of non-motorized transport (NMT) system to solve the urban transport problems in Kathmandu Valley.

Mr. Bhushan Tuladhar, Regional Technical Advisor-South Asia, UN-Habitat highlighted the issues, challenges and opportunities of NMT in Nepal. "Simply expanding the roads as we are doing now will not solve the congestion problems", he said. "However the current road expansion has provided the opportunities for more sidewalks and cycle lanes", he added.

Continued in page 2...

3rd Kathmandu Sustainable...
Continued from page 1...

Mr. Navadeep Asija, Founder of Dial-a-rickshaw Scheme (Ecocabs) gave a presentation on the dial-a-rickshaw or ecocabs initiative in Indian Cities, and shared experiences, challenges, success story and lessons for Nepal. He said that there are almost 10 million population directly depends upon passenger cycle rickshaw for their daily livelihoods in India, and rickshaw is the largest sector to offer employment. "There are estimated 25,000 rickshaws operational in Chandigarh providing services to 5 lakhs passengers daily and save 75,000 liters of fossil fuel", he said.

Giving keynote remarks, Mr. Tulasi Prasad Sitaula, Secretary of MoPIT highlighted the work of ministry in sustainable mobility initiatives and promotion of NMVs. "Since 2 years, we are in progress of road expansion but widened roads are used for parking and no proper implementation of lane policy has taken place", he said. He further said that government has low investment in urban transport sector, but there are plans to construct several footpaths and cycle lanes, and operation of electric vehicles in core cities area of Kathmandu Valley.

The panel discussion was organized on the existing situation and challenges of NMVs, and way ahead for its promotion. During the panel discussion Mr. Ravindra Poudel from Kathmandu Metropolitan City (KMC) said, "KMC's aim is to promote environment friendly and non motorized transportation, and improve pedestrian zone, cycle and rickshaw", He

was positive in promoting non motorized vehicle, and pledged to provide identity cards to individual rickshaw drivers to manage rickshaw services.

Mr. Rajesh Manandhar, Vice Chairman of Rickshaw Owner's Association said that there are 472 rickshaws registered in KMC and registration of rickshaws has been stopped since 2032. He highlighted the existing problems "We don't have proper parking places for the rickshaws and the governmental agencies have discriminatory policies and behavior towards rickshaws", he said. The association demanded KMC to provide identity card for rickshaw drivers.

"There are estimated 40,000 wheelchair users in Nepal, but newly constructed roads are not accessible to the people with disabilities", said activist Mr. Sagar Prasain.

"NMVs not just provide the mobility options, but also help in making the city dwellers' life easier and keeping the city clean and livable", said Mr. Prashanta Khanal, Program Coordinator of CEN. often focused principally on road.

Mr. Sudarshan Dhakal, Director General of Department of Transport Management (DoTM) said that the registration and management of rickshaws have been transferred from DoTM to KMC. Mr. Suman Kumar Timilisian, DSP of Metropolitan Traffic Police Division (MTPD) has committed to provide trainings on rickshaw drivers on road safety, and traffic rules and regulations.

Mr. Suman Uddas Program Coordina-

tor of CEN said, "Urban road standard assuring the integration of NMT infrastructures and BRT system as key public transport mode are the major learning we can get from Chinese cities,"

Mr. Damodar Dhital, a FK exchange participants from CANN/Kathmandu University presented on the vehicle emission testing (VET) system in Nepal and shared best practices on VET in Vietnam and Sri Lanka. "VET has not been implemented properly in Nepal and government has failed to prioritize VET system", he said. "Given the rapid increase in motorization, VET is an effective system to improve the deteriorating air quality", he added.

Mr. Sudarshan Dhakal said that the NMVs should be promoted as transport mode, and favorable policies developed soon for its promotion.

Source: www.cen.org.np/MaYA

Traffic Police Start Road Safety Class for License Seekers

People from all walks of life, young and old, were all ears as a police officer gave a lecture on road safety at a jam-packed hall in Lalitpur on Sunday. "Traffic rules are for your safety, and everyone should know and always stick to the rules.

Violating the traffic rules may claim your life and even of others. So, your utmost priority should always be safe riding," said Inspector Rajendra Pokharel, chief of Public Awareness Section of the Metropolitan Traffic Police Division (MTPD), addressing more than 150 participants inside the hall of the Department of Transport Management (DoTM) at Ekantakuna in Lalitpur.

All the trainees were driving license aspirants who had to attend a compulsory traffic safety education class run by the traffic police.

From February 1, the DoTM, in collaboration with the MTPD, has made a mandatory provision for new driving license seekers to attend the traffic safety education class before they get the driving license.

More than 1,300 new license seekers have already taken the one-hour class. "Around 80 per cent of the accident takes place due to negligence on the part of drivers. So, our main aim is to make the drivers more responsible to minimize the rate of road accidents. We want to instill road safety discipline," said the officer about the class which is in operation for the last 15 days.

As per the statistic provided by the MTPD, more than 1,700 persons are killed in road accidents while over 1,500 more are seriously injured across the country every year.



After attending the class, Subhadra Basnet, a participant, said, "In the driving institute, I was just taught about the driving skills. But I had no knowledge about road safety measures for reducing the risk of road accidents. This class has really been fruitful for me, and I have grown more cautious."

Basnet, who is seeking license for her two-wheeler, added that the traffic police should provide such classes to license aspirants across the country. "I understand the disadvantage of violating traffic rules. A road is definitely not a place to die. I will drive my bike slowly and safely and even ask others to do the same," said Rajesh Pandey, 22, another participant from Anamnagar.

Ashish Gajurel, a traffic engineer, welcomed the move of the traffic police to provide traffic education to new license seekers. "In our country, hardly any institutes provide traffic education to the drivers. I think it is probably the first time that the traffic police are providing safety education to new license seekers.

Such classes not only help minimize accidents but also help in traffic management."

He said the awareness program also helps to build a good relation between the traffic police and vehicle operators and even pedestrians. Traffic education is crucial in developing countries such as Nepal where there are poor road infrastructures.

MTPD chief DIG Keshav Adhikari said the traffic police office is also working on the development of physical infrastructures required for such awareness campaign.

Source: www.myrepublica.com, February 16, 2014

Heavy Traffic Affects Road Upgradation Works

Government officials say the process to concrete pave different stretches of Nagdhunga-Naubise of Tribhuvan Highway has been affected due to heavy traffic.

They said it would be difficult, if not impossible, to complete the work in time without reducing the traffic significantly.

Tulasi Prasad Sitaula, secretary at the Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transport (MoPIT), said works to concrete pave critical 1.1-kilometer stretch from Jhaprekholra to Khanikhola is currently underway. The government has barred traffic on the stretch from 10 pm to 4 am for a couple of weeks starting February 11. The construction is expected to complete by mid-April.

Nagdhunga-Naubise section is probably the busiest road section in the country as more than 8,000 vehicles ply the road every day. Heavy traffic, particularly the heavily-loaded trucks, tippers and containers, has completely damaged the section despite frequent maintenance.

“We have constructed a two-day diversion by cutting the cliff beside the road section to ensure smooth movement of vehicles on the section. But we won’t be able to construct diversion for the remaining one-kilometer stretch due to geographical difficulties,” Sitaula added.

Sitaula also said pressure on the road could be eased by diverting small vehicles toward Chhahare-Gurje Bhanjyanga-Tokha via Galchhi. “Instead of looking for alternatives, drivers choose to stay in queue for hours. There is a need to encourage them to look for alternatives,” he added.

Only 10-kilometer stretch of the Galchhi-Chhahare-Gurje Bhanjyanga-Tokha road hasn’t been blacktopped. The road is only 19 kilometers longer compared to Galchhi-Kalanki section. However, vehicles cannot ply the road from 6 pm to 6 am as the Tokha-Gurje Bhanjyang section lies in the Nagarjun-Shivapuri National Park.

“There is a need to make drivers aware of the alternative routes to enter and

exit the Kathmandu Valley. We are mulling over launching an awareness campaign soon,” Sitaula said, adding that officials would first observe the alternative route.

Other alternative route that links Sitapaila with Dharke of Dhading, however, doesn’t look feasible as it is very steep. According to Sitaula, project to prepare Detailed Project Report (DPR) of the Sitapaila-Dharke road is currently underway with the financial support of Kuwait Fund. “After the DPR is ready, it will take only two years to construct the road,” added Sitaula.

Meanwhile, a feasibility study is underway for restructuring of the Naubise-Muglin section of the Prithvi Highway. According to officials, major highways need to be restructured every 15 years.

Source: www.myrepublica.com, February 17, 2014

Air Pollution Exposure on Drivers being Studied

Clean Energy Nepal/ Clean Air Network Nepal and Hong Kong Polytechnic University are conducting a study on exposure of public transport drivers to in-vehicle air pollution. The study will conduct real-time air quality monitoring inside the public transport and lung-function test of drivers. The study is supported by FK exchange program.

The objective of the study is to monitor particulate matter, NO₂, SO₂, CO, CO₂ and VOC concentration inside public bus and to analyze the possible health

impacts of air pollution on professional drivers based on lung function test and administered health record questionnaire results.

Survey is being conducted in different public bus routes in Kathmandu Valley. Public buses of “urban busy road” and “periurban road” are sampled. The routes selected under urban busy road are ring road and trunk route of Sajha Yatayat from New Buspark to Lagankhel with the total length 27.4km and 14.0km respectively while the route selected for

periurban road is Lagankhel to Godawari with the total length 10.3 km.

Air quality parameters is being monitored inside the vehicle with the best possible representation of microenvironment of drivers and over 30 drivers of sampled buses will be tested for lung function.

Metro Plan Dumped, Govt. Doles Rs 1,250 cr-BRTS Ahead

After spending crores on preparing Detailed Project report of the proposed Ludhiana Metro project (since 2011) which was estimated to cost a whopping Rs 10,330 crore, SAD- BJP government on Wednesday doled out much 'cheaper and economical' Bus Rapid Transit System (BRTS) for Ludhiana which will cost Rs 1,250 crore only.

The move comes few days before the announcement of the Lok Sabha polls has brought forth the financial crunch of Ludhiana Municipal Corporation and state government which is now sending this project to Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) for getting 50 per cent funds from the Centre and it was pre-

sented before the MC General House emergency meeting for instant approval.

Addressing the house, Mayor Harcharan Singh Gohalwaria talked straight and announced that 'for the time being Ludhiana Metro has been kept aside and now we are seeking house's approval for BRTS which like the Metro is aimed at solving traffic congestion in the city.'

The house taking a unanimous call approved the project which will now be put forth in a meeting with JNNURM officials in New Delhi. Isha Kalia, additional commissioner said, "The project is on the lines of Metro only but difference is that instead of rail tracks and

trains, corridors will be made especially for buses."

"We have to send the project to JNNURM for their approval and getting funds from centre so an emergency meeting was called," she added.

The project will be thoroughly carried out under guidance of Punjab Bus Metro society (PBMS) and is expected to be completed by 2018. However, the first phase of 14.5 km from Ayali Chowk to Gill village is proposed to be implemented in 2014-15 with fleet of 48 buses.

Source: www.indianexpress.com, February 13, 2014



Walkability in Kathmandu Valley
Walking: Our Right-of-Way

MaYA Factsheet #2 Walkability in Kathmandu Valley- Walking: Our Right-of-Way

This factsheet provides information on existing status and scenario of walking in Kathmandu Valley and provides recommendations to make the city more walkable.

[Click here to download](#)

© 2014 by Kathmandu Valley Walkability Initiative. All rights reserved. This factsheet is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike license. For more information, visit www.kv-walkability.org.

IMPORTANCE OF WALKING:

- Walking is the most efficient and environmentally sustainable mode of mobility.
- Walking and cycling provide positive health benefits for people, communities and the environment.
- Walking and cycling are low-cost and accessible modes of transport.
- Walking and cycling are safe and secure modes of transport.
- Walking and cycling are sustainable modes of transport.
- Walking and cycling are healthy modes of transport.
- Walking and cycling are fun modes of transport.

Good Reads:

1. [Trainspotting in Kathmandu](#): ekanipur, February, 27, 2014
2. [Disabled-Friendly Roads Must be a Priority](#), Umesh Raj Regmi, kantipuronline, February 25, 2014
3. [The Cost of Relying on Diesel](#): Om Astha Rai, myrepublica, February 8, 2014
4. [Project to Improve Air Quality in the KV-A Talk with Dr. Maheswar Rupekheti](#): NEDEG Newsletter, February, 2014

Prepared by: **Rassu Manandhar** | Edited by: **Prashanta Khanal**

Clean Air Network Nepal (CANN) is a network of organizations and professionals involved in air quality management in Nepal. The goal of CANN is to increase the ability of professionals and other interested stakeholders to effectively address the problems of air pollution in Nepal. We encourage you to join hands with us to expand our campaign for clean and better Air. CANN is a country network of Clean Air Asia and hosted by Clean Energy Nepal. For more information: www.cen.org.np; www.cleanairinitiative.org

To contribute articles, news items, or event announcements for the next issue, send an email with the complete details and URL source to info@cen.org.np or rassu@cen.org.np

Secretariat: **Clean Energy Nepal**
POB No. 24581 | 140 Bulbule Marg, Thapagaun, Baneshwor,
Email: info@cen.org.np | Web: www.cen.org.np
Tel: 977-1- 4464981